Holiday dreams

Faith groups partner to host Christmas block party.

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Thunder freezes out Hawks

OKC beat Atlanta at the Peake, winning 120-117.

Page 1B

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OKLAHOMA CAPITOL

Funding measures pass, but more work remains

BY DALE DENWALT
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Oklahoma House lawmakers quickly passed a spending package Friday, setting up another anticipated series of votes in early 2018 to fully fund the current budget year.

The Senate previously approved the bills and Gov. Mary Fallin quickly added her signature Friday.

The $44 million approved in this second special session will go to the Oklahoma Health Care Authority and Department of Human Services, two of the three agencies most affected by the loss of cigarette fee revenue struck down by the Oklahoma Supreme Court in August. The money will fund the agencies until May 1, two months shy of the next budget year.

A third agency, the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, already has enough appropriations to operate until May 1. Passage of the bills assures that

SEE FUNDING, 2A

Chapel tribute

The Most Rev. Paul S. Coakley, archbishop of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, shares a homily at the dedication Mass for the Blessed Stanley Rother Chapel on Thursday at the Center of Family Love in Okarche. At left is Patrick Rother, Stanley Rother's nephew.
[PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE CENTER OF FAMILY LOVE]

Okarche center names expanded worship area for hometown priest

BY CARLA HINTON
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Editor's note: This story is part of "Road to Sainthood," an ongoing series about the late Rev. Stanley Rother, the first American recognized as a martyr by the Catholic Church and the first U.S. priest to be beatified.

OKARCHE — A chapel named for a beatified priest was dedicated Thursday in a special ceremony at the Center of Family Love in his hometown.

A mission church in Arkansas became the first church named after the Rev. Stanley Rother, but the newly expanded chapel at the Center of Family Love has the distinction of being the first worship space in Oklahoma to be given the beloved priest's name.

The unique occasion drew a standing-room-only crowd of about 100 people to the new Blessed Stanley Rother Chapel housed on the center's complex at 635 W Texas on Thursday. Another 60 people watched the ceremony on a big screen in an overflow area adjacent to the worship space.

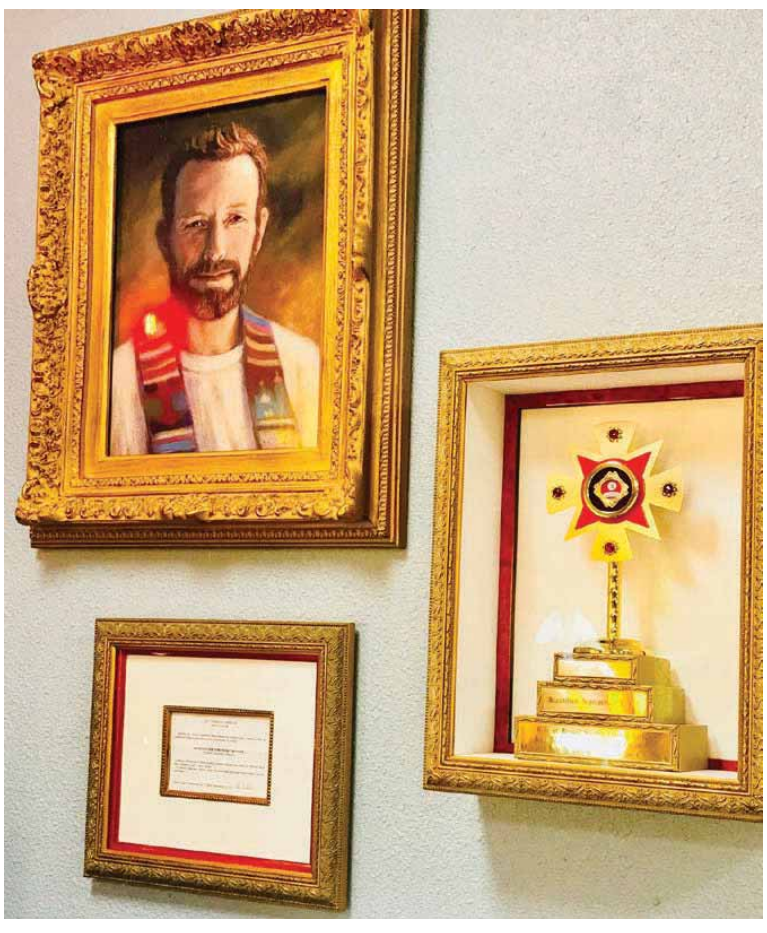
In his homily during the dedication Mass, the Most Rev. Paul S. Coakley noted that it was appropriate that the chapel named for Rother was almost

SEE CHAPEL, 2A

ROAD to SAINTHOOD

ONLINE

Go to Oklahoman.com to watch a video about the dedication of an Okarche chapel named for the late Rev. Stanley Rother.



A first-class relic of the Rev. Stanley Rother is featured next to a picture of the beatified priest and Okarche native on the wall of the Blessed Stanley Rother Chapel at the Center of Family Love in Okarche.
[PHOTO BY CARLA HINTON, THE OKLAHOMAN]

Parents of Perry girls sue district

Suit claims officials didn't report abuse

BY TIM WILLERT
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PERRY — The parents of 15 girls who said they were molested by a teacher's aide are suing Perry school officials for damages.

A federal lawsuit filed Friday in Oklahoma City accuses Perry Public Schools and the Board of Education of showing "deliberate indifference" by failing to remove or report the aide after he was accused of sexual misconduct.

The lawsuit alleges school officials failed to provide a safe learning environment for students and violated federal protections by "ignoring" numerous allegations made against Arnold Cowen and not immediately removing him from Upper Elementary School after "receiving notice of his misconduct."

Cowen, 86, is awaiting trial. He is facing 21 felony counts, including 19 counts of lewd or indecent acts to a child and one count of aggravated possession of child pornography. Police found more than 100 pornographic images and videos on his home computer.

Cowen is accused of molesting the girls in 2016 and early 2017 while he worked as a volunteer at the school. He was removed after parents complained to police.

A police investigator said Cowen confessed to molesting children at the school, adding that several girls were victimized after the school's principal failed to report multiple accusations.

SEE PERRY, 3A

TODAY'S PRAYER
God of joy, You fill us with joyful expectation and comfort us with Your saving power. Amen.

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Classified	1E	Opinion	8A
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